

**ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

The invention provides caspase recruitment domain (CARD)-containing polypeptides and functional  
5 fragments thereof, encoding nucleic acid molecules, and  
specific antibodies. Also provided are screening methods  
for identifying CARD-associated polypeptides (CAPs), and  
for identifying agents that alter the association of a  
CARD-containing polypeptide with itself or with a CAP.  
10 Further provided are methods of altering a biochemical  
process modulated by a CARD-containing polypeptide, and  
methods of diagnosing a pathology characterized by an  
increased or decreased level of a CARD-containing  
polypeptide.